[1]

Weymouth
Oct. 21st 1871.

My dear Mr May

I will not lose time in explanations or apologies, though I know that I must have seemed strangely neglectful; but I rely upon your indulgence hoping that even at this late day I may be able to furnish some fragments of the information you require respecting the first

Anti Slavery Fairs. I have begun several times to write this little juice of history or rather of passing reminiscences, but have always thrown my notes aside, finding that I was attempting too much in endeavouring to exhibit the state of things from the beginning of the Anti Slavery movement & especially the state of things immediately preceding the first Fair in 1834. Now I will try to be wiser & less diffuse although I state fear that a knowledge of these Antecedents ~~are~~ is really necessary to the understanding the instrumentalities of the

Cause especially the Fans whose beginning progress & ending cannot be otherwise explained.

I will allude merely to a few facts which may as well be mentioned here, as out of them arose the circumstances which directed the following course of action.

Great excitement in the community had been occasioned by the "New England Anti Slavery Convention" which met in the May of 94 in Boylston Hall — If I am not greatly mistaken in the date. It was a most successful gathering & the presence & the eloquence of able & devoted abolitionists from all parts of the country made

a profound impression on the large audience. Great enthusiasm was felt & testified & the abolitionists rejoiced in the adhesion of large numbers of the pastors & church members of Massachusetts

If I am not grossly mistaken (for I was not present at that convention myself) the convention was addressed by the Rev. Henry Ware the Rev. George Putnam then colleague pastor with Rev Dr Porter of Roxbury. Rev Dr Follen & these with many others then felt as they expressed, the deepest interest in the cause but they had not considered or comprehended the strength of

the opposing forces - so enthusiastic were the pledges & speeches of that remarkable occasion that even at this day I am astonished that so little remains of the promise of the Convention. Dr Follen and some others worked with us to the last.

The strength of the convention produced great agitation in the Public mind. The Abolitionists redoubled their efforts - & knew better than did the public, how many of those who had laid their hands on the plough were looking back in dismay.

then, discussion ceased, & a great silence took the place of the preceding excitement. It was strangely impressive; not a word of the Anti Slavery Society was reported in any newspaper the public was hushed on this matter & only when convinced that this ignoring policy was unavailing did the fury of press & people break out. We ate was quite enough in Boston in the early months of the year 1834.

~~Anta~~ In 1834, Mrs Ellis Gray Loring & Mrs David Lee Child, resolved to hold a fair in aid of the Mass

* the 1st was then the New England A.S.S. & it was not until a year later that we called the Mass A.S.S.

Anti Slavery Society* then,
as always, much in want of
funds. These Ladies were
assisted by a few other
individuals whom Sympathy
brought to their aid & the
Fair was held on the 22d of Dec 1834
on the little
Hall connected with the
Anti Slavery office & was
rented with it, by the Mass
A.S.S. It was No. 46
Washington Street
I was in the Country &
was unable to be present
at the Fair, but my sisters
A.W.W. assisted at the
tables & others of my Family
were present. I think there
were Miss Paul daughter of the celebrated preacher
the Misses Lincolns & the
the Chapman Family of Channing Place
and Misses Parsons of Roxbury

* The Ladies then the New England A.S.S. & it was not until a year later that women were allowed to join societies &c

but the New England A.S.S. Convention was held all winter after in May

there were with many others there. I remember with no little satisfaction our little contributions to the Fair & am amused at this distance of time to think how much we thought of them. I believe then the Cause at stake so great, nothing done in its behalf could seem insignificant.

~~[illegible]~~ This Fair was held ~~[illegible]~~ one day the avails of the sale were $360, which was paid into the Treasury of the Mass. A.S.S. or rather the New England anti SS.

The next was a year never to be forgotten the year 1836!

Mr George Thompson had accepted the invitation addressed to him & had come to help the Cause in America. He was one of the most powerful advocates of Freedom in England & had done more than any other to secure the abolition of West Indian Slavery. The victory had been gained in England & he had consented to help the friends of the American Slave. His first speech in New England was made at Groton Mass. & subsequently he addressed many audiences

in Boston and its neighbourhood. His overpowering Eloquence (I have never heard any thing that could compare with it) roused the fear & indignation of all classes. Those who did not hear him at that period, especially when in public debate with Ralph Randolph Gurley the able friend & supporter of the Colonization Society, can have little Idea of his transcendent Power & ability - He held his audiences breathless. No man thought of the

effects of his eloquence on others, or of the danger his boldness might arouse - but only of his own convictions & end emotions. His speeches were great orations. I have heard him speak to a few persons collected in a Country School house, with indescribable power. - Converts to the cause went out from his lectures strong & good men & women a life long devotion to the cause of American Freedom. His Prayers were like great inspirations, & no one could hear them unmoved. No wonder that Pro Slavery

lous alarmed & indignant.
Throughout the whole of the
year 1835 there were alarming
dangers - incipient mobs
then came desperate
attempts to break up Anti
Slavery meetings. then
plots to seize & abduct
Mr Thompson; these
last enterprises were un-
dertaken by Southern
Gentlemen sojourning in
the city. I should like to
tell the story of the dangers
encountered in Anti Slavery
meetings - sometimes at
the Anti Slavery monthly concert
of Prayer, sometimes at Mulber

meetings of the Society
or at public debates.
I recall especially a meet-
ing at Congress Hall
where Mr T. narrowly
escaped assassination by
the forcing a condemned
door leading to a neigh-
bouring Warehouse.
He was only saved by
the cool courage of
Mr Samuel J. May.
The public excitement
culminated at last in
the Great Mob of Gentle
men of Property &

"standing" which attacked the annual meeting of the Boston Female Anti-Slavery Society assembled at the Mass Soc's hall at 46 Washington street. I need not dwell on that story though it has never yet been half told.

Mr Garrison was sent to Jail for safe keeping through Mr Lyman's roof would have seemed an

more suitable shelter.
Mr Henry G. Chapman's
house was repeatedly
visited (once late at night)
by committees of the Mob
which remained on the
ground all the night after
the battle. Mr & Mrs
C. found it the safest
course, to take their little
children from their beds
& remove them to the
house of their grandfather
No. 6. Chauncey Place
They themselves remained to receive
possible committees. All
the servants had been
sent away as the house

had been threatened by
popular outcry —
by anonymous letters,
& after the experience
of the day they had every
reason to fear an
assault, especially as the Mem
bers of the Anti Slavery
Society — driven from
their place of meeting
had adjourned to this
Chapmans house No. 11 Mot Street where
they finished the Soc's
business, — and as Mr
Thompson was believed to
be the guest of Mr Chapman
the danger was obvious.

The Mob was on the
21st of October 1835

In the course of this year
& while all the events
above mentioned were
in progress it had occurred
to Mrs H. G. Chapman
that the holding of an
annual fair, if
adopted by the Boston
Female Anti Slavery
Society, might greatly
promote its usefulness
& its influence in propelling
the Anti Slavery movement

Great objection was made to adopting the Fair as a Society measure because of conscientious scruples on the part of some of the members. The discussion was long but the Society finally consented to adopt the Fair as one of its own operations. The members of the Society did not generally cooperate. Such of the members as worked for a fair voted for it & appointed a committee. No money was taken from the Society's treasury & no one's conscience was

troubled

the Fair of 1835

was appointed to take

place on the 23d of Dec

but in the state of

feeling then existing

in Boston it was utterly

impossible to obtain ~~any~~

any suitable hall for

the occasion. None was

attainable but the inconven-

iently situated one at

46 Washington Street which

had become especially repulsive

to purchasers since its invasion

by a Mob. Under these

circumstances Mrs Chas

Henry Chapman offered

to the Fair the accommodation

of their house at
No. 5. Chauncy place;
they fully sympathized
with the interest felt by
their children in the
great Cause & made the
offer in the full knowledge
of the risk they accepted.
It may be interesting to
record that early in the
year a family council of
the Chapman family
had been held, to consider
how, in the course of that
year they could best help
the Cause. Several plans
were proposed & this was
chosen. No pains or expense
was spared on the part of Mr

Mr Chapman to secure the safety & success of the enterprise. It was arranged that the Fair should be held two days & that it should not be open in the evenings as it was considered unsafe. The Washington Street mob had taken place only two months before. No police was employed but a careful observation was kept upon the premises, there was no disturbance.

The Fair opened on the 23d of Dec. & was open two days. It was well attended & was more successful than we had ventured to hope. The mob was still in all minds &

& we had not considered
it prudent to advertise the
Fair which was at one time
crowded — It was a pretty
fair & offered many attractive
articles which were disposed
with much taste in the
large drawing rooms. Our
customers consisted of Abolition-
ists & such of our friends & con-
nexions as could venture to view
our unpopular enterprise.
The Ladies who had held the
first fair were with us as buyers
& sellers — Mrs Loring & Mrs
Child were there the Misses
Lemmedon — the Misses Sargent
Mrs & Mr. Robbins
Mrs Paul Mrs Johnson —
Mrs Southwick. all the
members of the Chapman &
Weston Families Many persons

came to the fair to express their regard for the family or its friends - who cared little for the show. It was a most interesting occasion to us all. There was a family dinner party at the house. Miss Paine daughter of the Colonel Minister was one of the guests & we all admired her intelligence & her fine manners — I remember well the honour expressed by friends or acquaintance of the family - on hearing of this, & the question "were the servants willing to wait at table?"! It was a great delight to us to see the Garrison take Mrs Chapman down ~~stairs~~ to dinner. Brown the Colored waiter of that time was one door keeper as it was necessary

to have one who understood all sorts of people. He kept a most vigilant watch & utterly refused to receive any compensation for his services. I must not omit one very touching circumstance. We had taken great pains to inform our colored friends of the time & place of holding the fair knowing how great would be their satisfaction in seeing such an assemblage of their friends laboring for the deliverance of their race from bondage — We had sent tickets of admission to many individuals & as time served we sent special messengers bearing the exception not Amos Bane not a colored

person appeared I enquired of Mr Brown if it could be possible that they had not received their invitations & he explained that his people had been fully informed & were much gratified by our remembrance of them, but that they had held a meeting to consider the matter & had decided not to visit the Fair lest their presence should interfere with the success of the sales by keeping customers away or expose the ladies of the fair to inconvenient or insult — "they would not" they said "make the work of their "friends harder by their presence"

The nett proceeds of
the Fair which were
were paid through
the treasury of
the Boston Female
Anti Slavery society
into the treasury of
the Massachusetts
Anti Slavery society
amounted to
$343.

3d Anti Slavery
Tair

In the year 1835 the Anti Slavery Fair was held in the year preceding nominally by the Boston Female Society but really by a few individual members aided by a few country societies the difficulty of obtaining a hall ~~remained~~ recurred as in 1835

but it was more obvious as it was necessary to make some effort to secure a Hall. I was on a committee (I think a committee of one) to procure accommodation for the Fair & I asked for every Hall in Boston that was suitable for our purpose & I asked in vain

It was from Abner Kneeland the chief of the association of persons which ~~which~~ the world called of Infidels but who called themselves "Free Enquirers" that we at last obtained a Hall tolerably adapted to our needs

It was well situated in Summer Street & was best known as the Artist's Gallery. I will remember going with Mrs D. L Child & Miss Ann Chapman on the 22d of Dec. 1836 to open the Hall in order that we might have time to have the boxes & articles which had been received at the houses where contributions were left opened & arranged, before the time for opening the fair. It was

a colder day than the Pilgrim Fathers ever knew, at least we thought so Mrs Johnson came to help us - & we soon had our tables in order & our goods displayed — in those days there was little thought of decoration but I remember think it was a pretty fair we found many old friends at their posts & many new ones coming to our help - Articles were received from Lynn
Andover
Bedford
Hingham
Andover
Haverhill
Reading
Washington D.C.
Weymouth
Juvenile Sewing circle
Cambridge port

The amount of money raised was $550 & was paid over to the Treasury of the Mass Soc. in due form

Money being then 8 per ct - pr month

open only one day

The fair was held only one day

The 4th Antislavery Fair
was held in 1837
in Hall No. 1. Marlborough
Chapel Washington street
it was continued days
the net proceeds were
$800 paid mainly into
the Treasury of the
Massachusetts A.S. Soc.

This was the first use to
which the hall had been
put – it was still unfinished
when we arrived to take posses-
sion for the sale on the eve-
ning preceding, & we were
busy in unpacking & methodizing
our goods & putting up our dec-
orations. While a dozen Carpenters

were engaged in putting down the flooring.

The Fair continued.
was well attended often crowded

The 5th Anti Slavery Fair was held in the Hall 1. Marlboro Chapel Washington Street in 1838.

continued —
the gross results of this Fair was $1100,00

I was not present at this Fair & know nothing of it but the results — $1100 gained by our own labours of the year but we could not act with the new organization anti friends & we

Copy of the circular of the Anti Slavery Party & Supporters the Female Lyceum Fair
Marlboro Hall for the support of the Liberator
I have spoken of this in another place

The 6th Anti Slavery Fair
of 1839 was held in
Hull & Marlborough
Chapel Washington St —
in October
~~continued under Dec 25th~~
the avails of this Fair
amounted to $1500,00

It will be observed that the
Fair of 1839 was held at an
unusual season & it should
be explained why this change
was made —

The Clerical appeal had
appeared in the Summer of 1837
& there was trouble & discontent

in the Boston Female Anti-Slavery Society the Members who had "conscientious scruples about Fairs etc having been tampered with by the disappointed Clerical party some of whom while state officers of the Massachusetts A.S.S. were plotting how they could best get rid of Garrison & his friends who did not hesitate to deny the right of a slave holding & proslavery Church to be called the Church of Christ. In the discussions in the Boston Female A.S.S which preceded the Fair of '39 it distinctly appeared

that many members of the Society were ~~using~~ making every possible effort to deprive the Mass. Soc of the support of the B. F. A.S.S. & to obtain the management of the Soc's Funds, they were really a minority of the Society who had ~~taken little~~ part in raising the money which they now endeavored to control. Their objections to adhere to the ~~New York Soc~~ "the Parent Soc. so called. but whose proper title was the American Anti Slavery Society

the Board of the New York Soc. was then engaged in plotting the destruction of the Massachusetts Soc & the forming of a new Organization which should not be hampered by the stern integrity of the Mass. Abolitionists - (at least of the Mass Soc's Board.

The disaffected members of the Boston F A.S.S. although as I have said forming a minority of the Society had the advantage of finding most of the officers of the Soc - in harmony with them. also this enabled them to pack

the meetings with persons who had no further interest in the soc than its destruction - they succeeded by fraudulent means such as refusing to receive votes from old members - false counting of votes - altering books & lists etc in getting possession of the power to control the disposition of the funds.

As soon as this hostility on their part was openly understood & exposed - we resolved to act independently & leaving them to take their own way Mrs Chapman advertised instantly a Fair to be held by Anti Slavery Ladies in the October of 1839 - as may be seen above

Fair of individuals in Oct 39
brought us 1500 — the
opposition members held their
fair (for they had now gotten
over all their conscientious
scruples) in Dec. & raised
$200 — I do
know what they did with it
or of any of the Society assets
which finally fell into their
hands — Our connexion
with these persons closed
with a special meeting called
in 1840 April 11th — at
which meeting after a scene
of great confusion they pretended
to have secured a vote to
dissolve the Society — we declared
the Society still existing as the
whole proceedings were fraudulent
& invalid & we went on with the Soc.

In 1840 we were happily separated from the troubles of our peace. The ~~[illegible]~~ Fair of that year will long be remembered — an unusual number of country towns were represented & valuable gifts came from all quarters. Now the Fair assumed something of the aspect that distinguished its later years. It was now in the hands of a few individuals connected with no society: there was no organization — no committee meetings tho' the list of names attached

to the ~~committee meetings~~
annual call for the Fair
was always considered as
the anti slavery Fair's committee
all these Ladies acted in
harmony & each did what
she could to promote the
enterprise whose harmony
was never disturbed. Mrs
Chapman carried on the
enormous Correspondence
which grew & gained importance
as time went on, & the
whole number of articles
addresses reports & advertise-
ments Bazaar gazettes &c.
there was no end of it — a few

ladies in Boston always came
to gether without formality &
with such assistance as they
could hire, to organize &
arrange the first the task of
decoration. of providing
hospitality for our country
friends who always were
kind enough to send a
representative to take charge
of their respective tables.
the ~~arrangements~~ labor necessary
to carry on as it were
a sort of hotel during
the fair - the time of holding
it being extended as it became
went on, till this was accom-
plished. I hand by know
now — but it was hard work

as we had very little
money to spend ~~[illegible]~~ &
~~[illegible]~~ permitted no outlay
not absolutely necessary
we employed no servants,
all the lamps & candles
that were then required were
furnished by our friends
there was no gas in our
halls — we furnished from
our own houses supplies of
porcelaine & silver, later
we found friends in the shops
who obliged us by loans of
necessary articles. — our
principle was to sell
every thing & buy nothing
It was strictly forbidden
to take any articles on comm
however attractive

up to the time when we obtained Amory Hall we employed no door keeper the gentlemen interested in the cause filling that office by turns. We were always furnished by the country friends with beautiful wreaths & evergreens for our Christmas decorations Mrs Chapman herself painted & arranged all the banners & legends that marked the position of the sewing tables — the whole Boston force of abolitionism was assisting at the arrangement of the decorations & while this was going

on we were welcoming
country friends & establish-
ing them in their respective
quarters. but I must
not omit to mention one
feature of the Fair of
1840 which has a peculiar
interest. This was the
Soirée with which the
fair closed — we had
issued cards of invitation to
a soirée to be held the last
evening of the Fair at
a dollar each — & I
suppose 300 tickets were
sold as I remember there
300 covers were required.
I write not dwell upon
the pains we took to make
this occasion agreeable &
interesting or upon the

thought-ful generosity when the guest of our friends who loaded our board with all the luxuries of all seasons — the scene was beautiful the tables whose arranged by Prom — & there was no end of beautiful porcelain & Silver — a wealth of Candelabra — & lamps which flushed on the beautiful flowers & fruits & which was more to us lighted up the dark faces of many of our colored friends who had at last felt free to accept our invitations. It was ~~[illegible]~~ the first time that the Colored ~~[illegible]~~ people had eat at our Prom white fellow citizens on terms of equality — & deep was the feeling that a new era was inaugurated

& that when these things could be done the time of the deliverance of the slave was at hand.
The soirée was a most successful occasion.
after the bunquet ~~where~~ "the sage ~~[illegible]~~ ~~[illegible]~~" — addresses from some of our most eloquent speakers were ~~made~~ heard & echoed to the echo. The happiness of our guests was delightful to witness. They had visited the Lutes fam with great satisfaction & the public were becoming accustomed to their dark faces but this soirée was different. they were hearkening head at a table

where black & white were alike welcome - a young colored girl told me the morning after the banquet that she "had been too happy" she had enjoyed more than she could tell me It was something she said "beyond expression" "It was like going to Heaven" & then she added - "I have had so much pleasure that now I am ~~ready~~ willing to die"

many acknowledgments of the same kind came in though none so enthusiastically expressed -

at the Fair of 1840
the sum raised
was $2001.

In 1841
the fair was held in
Armory hall but
I have no means of
making up any precise
account of any receipts
from it
is it not written in
the papers of the
Liberator?
or Have the
Boston Library at

furnish all the
required information

will you kindly excuse
this hasty scrawl
& correct as you can
my clerical errors of
which I know there must
be thousands —
I am writing late in
the night — & am
unable to finish this as
I should wish —
yrs ever CW